

Overview

Siman 10 Seif 8:

A *kapah* that is open in a manner that it has four corners and one attaches a fastener to render it closed so that it would be exempt from *tzitzis* has not changed the status of the garment unless the fastener is on the bottom half of the garment and it should also be located beneath one's belt so that it should also appear that the majority is closed for if it is does not appear closed it is prohibited to wear the garment since it gives the impression of impropriety.

- ❖ One should not affix snaps that require an act to undo more than half way down his *talis koton* since it is then considered closed and exempt from *tzitzis* If, however, the snap is very loose it is not considered an attachment. (M.B. 29)
- ❖ One who wears his *talis koton* beneath his garments does not have to worry about giving the appearance of impropriety. (M.B. 30)

Siman 10 Seif 9:

The corners must be square as opposed to rounded.

- ❖ Something rounded is not considered a corner. (M.B. 31)

Siman 10 Seif 10:

A headdress is exempt from *tzitzis* even those from western countries that are worn by throwing the two ends over one's shoulders and body even if the headdress covers one's head and most of his body. The reason is that the headdress is worn to cover the head and *tzitzis* is worn on garments intended to cover one's body.

Stories to Share

Adorning a Mitzvah

ש"ע סי' י', מ"ב ס"ק ל"ג: "ומה שעושים עטרה לטלית..."

On today's amud the Mishnah Berurah explains why the custom is to make an atarah on one side of a tallis.

A certain person was the son of a ger. His non-Jewish grandmother was a well-meaning woman who wished to help her family as much as possible. Once she saw a silver atarah on someone's talis and decided that she wished to donate her own fine silver jewelry to be used to fashion a stunning atarah for her grandson's tallis.

Although the grandson wished to do anything permitted to make his grandmother happy, he wasn't certain that there was no halachic problem with this. After all, we do not use old garments for tashmeshei kedushah. Perhaps just like we may not fashion a paroches from old garments, we also cannot make an atarah from silver used by a hedyot? In addition, perhaps she went with this very same silver to church. Wouldn't that be absolutely forbidden to use as an adornment for a mitzvah?

Halacha Highlights

Four-cornered garments that are exempt from *tzitzis*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 10 Seif 10

מצנפת פטורה ... ואע"פ שמתכסה בה ראשו ורובו פטור

A headdress is exempt ... even if one covers his head and most of his body

Shulchan Aruch and subsequent Poskim discuss different types of four cornered garments that are exempt from *tzitzis*. The exact appearance of these garments is sometimes difficult to imagine since we are not familiar with the different styles of clothing that were in use in different places at different points in history. There are, however, certain principles that emerge from these discussions that could be applied to modern clothing as well. Bais Yosef (סוף סימן זה) writes that for a garment to be obligated in *tzitzis* it must be a כסות-garment, which is defined as an article of clothing intended to protect a person from heat or cold. As such a גלימה - some sort of outer garment – is exempt from *tzitzis* even if it has four corners since it is not intended to protect the wearer; it is intended to give honor to the one wearing the garment.

This definition raises an interesting question. Darkei Moshe (על הבי"י הנ"ל) notes that according to this definition the *talis* that is commonly worn by men for davening should be exempt from *tzitzis* since it is worn for the mitzvah and not to provide protection from the heat or cold. Elya Rabba (טי"ו) cites others who answer that a garment that is designed for the fulfillment of the mitzvah does meet the definition of כסות and it is only a garment that does not protect nor serve the function of the mitzvah that is exempt from *tzitzis*.

Another exemption mentioned in Bais Yosef and cited in י' סעיף is that garments that are designed to protect the head are exempt from *tzitzis*. Poskim write that this exclusion is not limited to garments that are designed to protect one's head. Any garment that is designed to protect a single part of the body rather than the majority of the body is exempt (עי' ערוה"ש סעי' כ"ב).

When this question came before Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein, shlit"a, he permitted the grandson to use the silver to fashion an atarah on his tallis. "As far as your first concern, that is certainly no problem as we find in the Bach. (שו"ת הבי"ח, סי' י"ז).

The second concern is also not a problem since this silver was not itself used for avodah zarah, merely to adorn the grandmother when she went to church. This is similar to the psak of the Pri Megadim regarding using church pews to sit on in shul. He permits this since the benches in shul are not in themselves kadosh and the same is true regarding an atarah. Although it beautifies the tallis, it is not in itself a mitzvah, merely beautifying a garment that is a way to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzis. This is certainly no worse than church pews which the Pri Megadim permitted."